KEYBASE USER GUIDE

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I. Introduction

This user guide is intended to help new users get oriented with Keybase. This application allows for both communications (chatting) and file-sharing. Although it seems complicated at first, it's really quite a simple program to use, very similar to other online communications applications. And if you encounter things you're having trouble figuring out, don't be afraid to poke around. There aren't very many nooks and crannies in this program, so a little experimentation is likely to uncover nearly everything.

This guide will cover how to get started in Keybase, how to protect your digital information, and how to navigate Keybase's various features. Please feel free to comment on this document if you find sections confusing or if there's something else you would like us to cover.

II. Program Overview

Keybase is one of the main tools the XR US team uses for communication. It allows national team members to simultaneously contact all active XR US members with announcements and updates. It also allows XR US members to communicate with each other, share ideas, discuss strategy, etc. It's almost the ideal communication platform - the only issue is getting everyone to make an account and check the application regularly.

The program is still in active development, you might find a strange bug or something that doesn't make sense. But by golly, it sure gets the job done. If you do run into a problem, feel free to email `security@cldc.org` and describe the problem, or better yet, join the Keybase team `security_xchange` and ask your question there! If it's a problem with the mobile app, often closing it and re-opening it will fix the issue.

XR US uses Keybase because it is end-to-end encrypted, which means that if your messages are intercepted or requested through a court by a private entity or the US government, they will appear as indecipherable gibberish. There is no perfect protection from surveillance, but end-to-end encryption is just about as good as it gets. The security benefits and risks of Keybase are described in more detail in Section III below.

a. Functions

XR US mainly uses three functions of Keybase:

- Teams – These are the main units of organization for Keybase.
 - XR US has a national Keybase team, for example. We strongly encourage all local groups to create a Keybase team that's just for their local group to use as

well. Each team or subteam has its own chat #channels and filesystem, where you can have discussions and share files that only team or subteam members can see.

- Each team has four possible roles, arranged in a hierarchy. These are listed from fewest to greatest capabilities ("permissions" in computer-speak):
 - `Reader` – Can participate in chats and view files, but cannot create chat channels nor add/edit/delete files in the file system
 - `Writer` – Can participate in chats, create chat channels, or add/edit/delete files in the file system
 - `Admin` – Can do everything above, as well as add or remove team members or change their role in the team, as well as create subteams
 - `Owner` – Same capabilities as `Admin`, but can also delete teams, and are immune to role changes by any `Admin`.
- `Teams` can have **`Subteams`**, which allow working groups to be cryptographically (meaning, strongly) isolated from all other teams and subteams, allowing communication without the entire group seeing their messages. You should create a subteam for each of your working groups.
 - For example, team **`muppet_show`** could have subteams **`muppet_show.finances`** or **`muppet_show.direct_action.`** Only team members added to those subteams can see the chats and files. Even an admin of team **`muppet_show`** cannot see the subteam's files or chats, unless they join the subteam.
 - Joining a subteam is public (visible to the subteam members, and the Keybase servers), so the subteam members can be assured that no `admin` can lurk in their chats or files, and admins can prove they have no knowledge of what was discussed in the subteam. A great example of security culture enabled by Keybase!
 - This is beneficial for security reasons, but it also avoids bothering other members with messages that don't affect them. For example, passwords to your finances working group's financial accounts shared in the finances working group chat won't be visible to other working groups. Only admins and owners can create subteams. Subteams can also have their own subteams, which can also have their own subteams.
- The only way to join a team is to be added by an administrator of that team. XRUS does not allow members in via request – their username must be submitted by a known XR member. See the "Getting Started" section for more details about joining the XRUS team.

- Chats – these are the main communications channels within Keybase. They are structured as group messaging forums – typing something into the chat will allow everyone in that

chat to see the message. Each place where chatting occurs is called a channel, and is denoted by a hashtag, e.g., **#general.**

- Each team and subteam has its own chat channel(s). Only team and subteam members can see their respective chat channels.
- All teams/subteams start with a **#general** channel, which everyone in that sub/team is subscribed to. Channels are hidden until someone creates a new channel -- admins, writers, and owners can do this [in the Chat tab, select the name of the group, select the gear icon, then select "Manage Chat Channels"]. Once you make a new #channel, the team becomes what's called a Big Team and is listed on the lower left side of the Chat tab (along with all #channels you are subscribed to). #channels need to be joined by team members themselves (an admin can't add them, people need to add themselves) and are useful for discussions around specific areas that not all group members need to participate in. Think of #channels as email lists that you can subscribe/unsubscribe/resubscribe to at will.

- File-Sharing – this allows group members to share files with each other online in an encrypted way, instead of using email. So, for example - rather than emailing a file to an XR member using Gmail, which will cooperate with the government should the govt request info on you or the file you're sending and which reads your files - a file you send using keybase is end to end encrypted and won't be seen by anyone except the person you sent it to. Similarly, your internet service provider won't be able to see it either. (or even the number and sizes of files). User guide for the files section coming soon :)

b. Program Navigation

The Keybase program is divided up into sections. The three functions listed above all have their own sections. There is a section for adding devices, which is covered below in the "Getting Started" section. There are also sections for editing your profile, sending cryptocurrency, creating Git repositories (you probably won't need to use this software-developers feature), and changing Keybase settings. which will not be covered in this guide.

The blue menu on the left-hand side of your computer screen or on the bottom of your phone screen allows you to navigate between sections. You can reach each section by clicking on its icon. Each section's name will appear in white once the icon is clicked. Navigation within sections will be covered in greater detail below.

The first time you use Keybase, you will often encounter big blue boxes advertising new features of Keybase. Just click the X in the top right corner to banish these boxes forever.

c. Notifications

Keybase is shy by default - a user only gets notifications of new messages in group chats when they are directly mentioned. You can mention someone by putting the "@" symbol in front of their username. For example, user cookie_monster would only get a notification in team xr.desserts in a message like: `hey everyone, remember @cookie_monster RSVP'd to bring kale chips tonight.`

The good news is that you can make Keybase send you notifications for the groups or chat channels that are important to you (and not be bothered with less urgent ones). Go to a group chat or #channel that is important to you, click on the small  , and then you can choose the frequency of your notifications

Please set your important group chats and channels to send notifications and/or check Keybase regularly. You will miss out on important announcements and discussions of key issues - we can't email everyone all the information every time. You'll also miss out on organizing tips and useful discussions with other groups, and eventually on action coordination as well. Not being on Keybase will be a big hindrance to your local group's potential, so make sure to try to get everyone signed up as soon as possible.

III. Security Considerations

Keybase uses the strongest possible encryption (end-to-end encryption) meaning messages and files are locked before they leave your device, and are not unlocked until they reach the devices of your friends. The app is open-source, and thus verifiably secure. Keybase takes extensive measures to ensure messages are authentic, that your account remains under your control, and that you are resistant to attempts to impersonate you or steal your messages or files (even from the Keybase service itself, which is super cool).

There are three major things to consider, though. The first is that Keybase protects your information as it traverses the Internet and other networks, and so the only way for an adversary to read your Keybase messages is to steal or compromise your device. This means that you need to do two things (outside of the scope of this guide) -- (A) ensure your device is encrypted (and locked with a strong password/passphrase, in case it is stolen; (B) keep your device protected from malware (malicious apps placed on your phone or computer that allow an adversary to gain

remote control over it) by installing all security updates. Especially for phones, you need to make sure your phone is still able to receive updates, and it has not been abandoned by whoever sold it to you.

The second major consideration is that Keybase really only protects your **data** (from everyone, including the Keybase service itself). This is a big deal, and the whole reason we use Keybase! But Keybase can't perfectly protect your **metadata** (the data about your data--who you're messaging, when and how often, the location of the device you log in from, the teams you are part of, etc.). These metadata **are not** public, but **are** known by the Keybase service itself, so if compelled they could share this information with other parties.

The third consideration (and the most important one) is that Keybase is a lot of things, a secure messenger, a file sharing tool, etc. but it is also a social network. This means it gives you several opportunities to overshare things about yourself, which is not such a big deal if you are using it for work or dating, but if using it for political or direct action organizing, could be very bad. The following information is **public** (meaning viewable by anyone in the world, including corporate security, local low-resourced hate groups, and law enforcement without a warrant):

- your **username** (recommendation: just make something up, not connected to your legal name, unless you have made the choice to be a public figure on the platform -- consider this carefully, first)
- any **info you provide in your bio** (recommendation: don't fill this out, or fill it out with non-identifying info)
- the **names of your devices**
- the **people you follow** (so only follow those you are happy to have public connections with -- you don't need to follow someone to chat or share files with them).
- the **people who follow you** (can't do much about this, but can have group agreements within your organizing group).

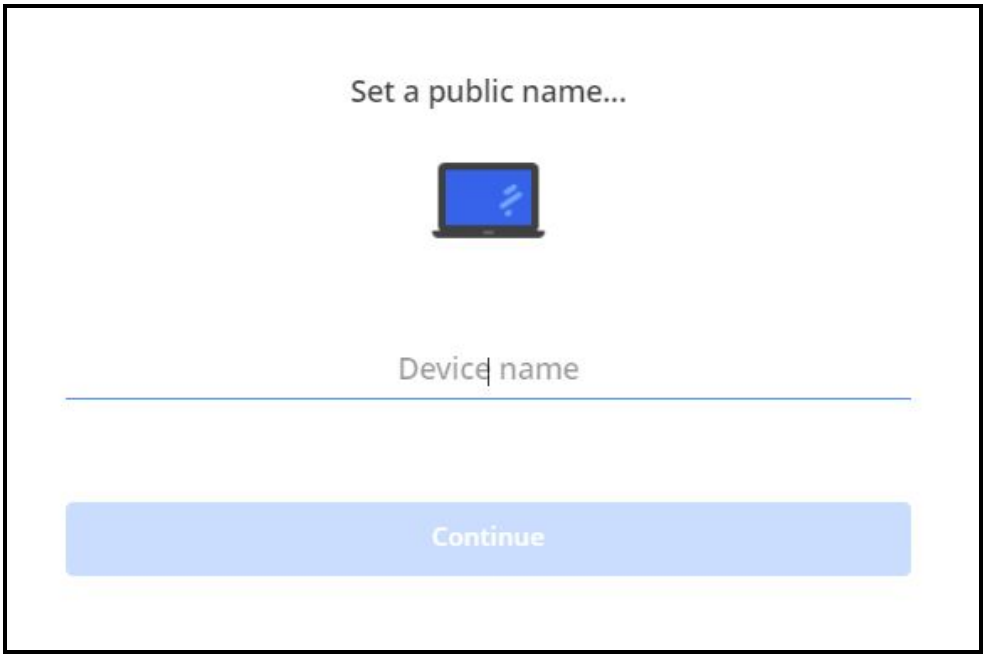
IV. Getting Started

The first step to start using Keybase is to download the program and install it on your computer or phone. On a computer, go to https://keybase.io and click the install button in the top-right corner. On a phone, download it like any other app.

Once you have it installed, you will be prompted to create a username. If you would like a greater degree of anonymity, use something other than your real name. Your username cannot be changed, so choose carefully!

You will also be prompted to create a passphrase. Like all passphrases, it should be something as long as possible that you can still remember (check out this guide to make a passphrase out of 6 or 7 common words that make it realistic to memorize but infeasible for even a powerful computer to guess) -- you can make it stronger using uppercase and lowercase letters, symbols, and numbers. Just be certain you can actually remember it. Write it down and carry it with you until you're sure you know it.

You will also be prompted to name the device you are currently using:



This name will be public, so don't name it "First Name Last Name's Computer"



Once you have created an account, you should immediately add any other devices on which you would like to use Keybase. The first step, again, is to install Keybase on your other device and name it. This name is also public. When you type in your username, you'll be given a list of all of the devices already tied to your account. Click on one that you have handy.

Then, switch over to the device you selected and click on the "Devices" section in the menu on the left-hand side:



If you are on a phone, the devices section is contained in the menu at the bottom right:



Once there, you will see an “Add new…” option at the top, which will allow you to add more devices to your account. Click “new phone” or “new computer”. A QR code will appear on your screen. Simply take a picture of that with the device you are adding and you will be able to use Keybase on that device.

If the device you are adding does not have a working camera, you can also use a “secret code”. First, on the device you are adding, click “Type secret instead” at the bottom. A 9 word secret phrase will appear on your screen. You have to generate the secret phrase on the new device, not the one you’ve already logged into. Then, go to your original device and type in the nine words that appear on the new device. You will then be able to use Keybase on the new device.

While you are in the devices menu, you should also create a “Paper Key”, which is a string of random words associated with your account that can be used as an additional form of verification. **If you only use keybase on one device, it is the only way you can reaccess your account if you forget your passphrase.**

To add a paper key, click on “Add new…” at the top of the devices section. Then click “new paper key”. You will see a string of 13 random words. Write this down on paper (yes, in the real world) and keep it somewhere safe.

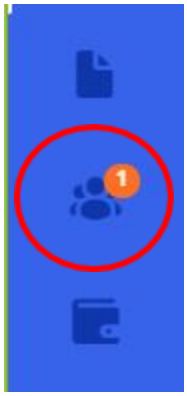
Now you’re all set! You can add a profile description, your name, and link other social media accounts to your Keybase if you want. These steps are all optional. They are all ways to link your

real self to your Keybase account, so if you want to maintain anonymity, do not add this information.

Once your account is set up, an admin needs to add you to the XRUS team. If you're a local coordinator, send your username to the national team member who onboarded you on signal. If you are trying to retain anonymity, DO NOT SEND USERNAMES BY EMAIL OR REGULAR TEXT MESSAGE. SEND USERNAMES ONLY THROUGH SIGNAL. If you're a member of a local group, send your username to your local coordinator, who will pass it along to a national admin. Anonymity is complex, however, so if you are looking to conceal your location/identity from the Keybase service itself, you will need to use a VPN *from the time you create your account, and each and every time you access it*. This is really hard to do in practice, but if you feel particularly at-risk for whatever reason and would like some help, please reach out.

Finally, once you're in the XRUS team, there are two more things to do before you're all set. First, you should subscribe to all of the channels you're interested in. Check out Section VI-c below (p 13) for more info on doing this. You'll also want to turn ON notifications for some of these channels. Check out Section II-c above (p 4) for more info.

V. Teams



This section allows you to view the teams you are a part of and see their members, as well as access team-specific chats. To reach this section, click on the "Teams" icon on the left-hand menu:

On a phone, look for the same icon at the bottom of your screen.

Navigation through this section is similar to navigating through a normal file system on your computer. Each time you click on something, you go one level deeper. To return to the higher level, you just click on the < Back button in the top left corner.

The highest level, the main "Teams" page, is a list of all of the teams in which you are a member. You will reach this level when you click on the "Teams" icon on the menu. There are two options at the top of this screen:

- + Create a team - As the name suggests, this will allow you to create a new team. If you are a local coordinator, you will use this option to create a team for your local group, if one does not already exist. It's really easy to create a team – just choose a name and maybe a picture, and then you're done! You cannot change a team name once it is created, so choose wisely.

-  - Using this option, you can join request to join a team if you know the team's name. Just type in the name of the team and a request will be sent to an Admin. The **XRUS national team does not accept people using this method**, but local teams might have adopted a different policy. See the end of the "Getting Started" section to read about how to join the XRUS team.

Clicking on a team or subteam's name will take you to that team's description page. This is the second level of the Teams section. To return to the main "Teams" page, click the "Back" button in the top left, or click on the "Teams" icon again.

On the team description page, there will be a "Chat" button. Clicking that will take you to that team or subteam's chat channel in the chat section.

You can also see a list of all of the members of that team or subteam on the team description page, under the heading "  ". And if you click the "  " heading, you can see all of the subteams within that team in which you are a member.

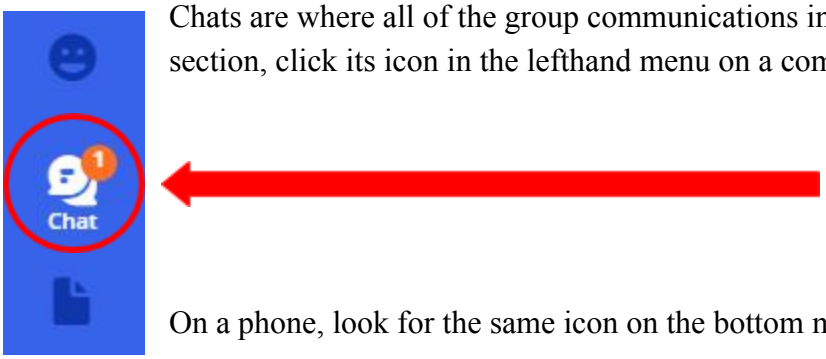
Clicking on a person's name under the "Members" heading will take you to the team member page, where you can view that person's role in the team. This is the third and final level of the "Teams" section. Clicking the "Chat" button will take you to a direct, one-on-one chat with that person in the "Chat" section. Clicking that person's name will take you to their profile page. To return to the team description page, click the back button in the top left corner.

If you are an admin or owner of a team, you will see several other options on both the team description and team member pages:

- On the team description page, you will see an "Add Members" button next to the chat button. After clicking that, you can add new members to your team or subteam by typing in their username.
 - Adding people is a little tricky. Just typing in someone's username and pressing enter will usually NOT work. To get the person you want, you have to manually click on their name when it appears.
 - You can add as many people simultaneously as you want. But all of the people added in a batch must have the same role (reader, writer, etc). Once you have entered all of the names you want, click "Add", select a role, and you're done.
 - PLEASE NOTE – adding a person to a subteam does NOT automatically add them to the full team.
- Under the "Subteams" heading, you will also see an option to create a new subteam. The new subteam will be created inside of the team whose description you're currently viewing.

- On the team member description page, not only will you see an option to chat with that person, you will also have the option to change their role on the team or remove them.
- Admins and owners also have access to more options under the "Settings" heading on the team description page. These are mostly self-explanatory.

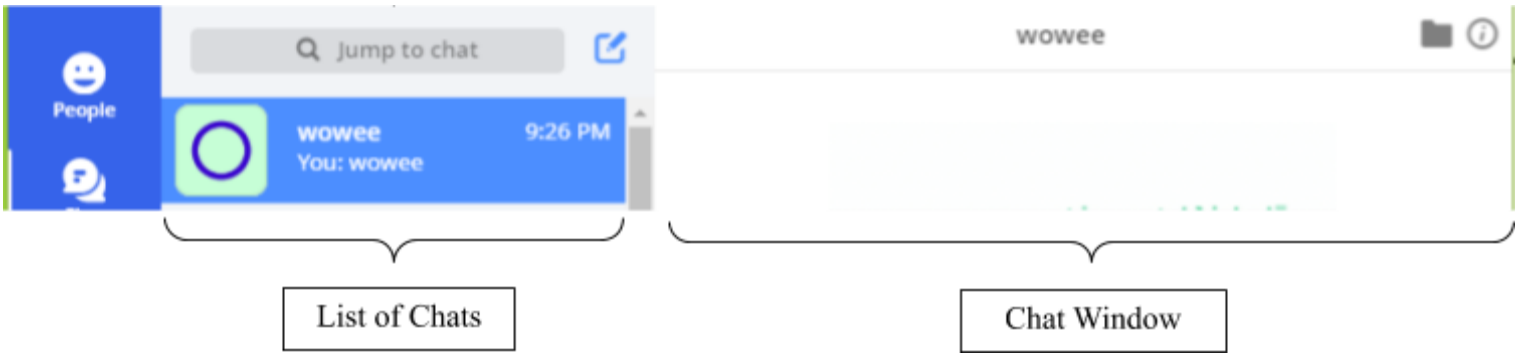
VI. Chats



Chats are where all of the group communications in Keybase take place. To access the "Chat" section, click its icon in the lefthand menu on a computer screen:

On a phone, look for the same icon on the bottom menu.

On a computer, the "Chat" section is divided into two main windows: the list of chats on the left, and the actual chat channel, where chatting occurs, on the right:



To begin chatting in a chat channel, first click the name of the chat you want to participate in. Then, that chat channel will appear in the chat window on the right.

On a phone, the chat windows are "inside" of the list of chats. So, to access a chat window, just click on the team or channel name. You can return to the list of all of your chats by clicking the back arrow in the top left corner of the screen.

The terminology here can get a little bit confusing. Remember that each team or subteam has its own chat channel, but also that teams can have additional, separate chat #channels as well. If a team has independent chat channels, it is called a "Big Team". It will be listed at the bottom of the "List of Chats" pane.

One important thing to understand about chatting is the use of the @ symbol. If you type @ and then someone's username, that person will get a notification on their phone and/or computer that you mentioned them in Keybase. It's a good way to get someone's attention if you're in a long string of messages or on a big team.

You can also type "@channel" to send a notification to everyone on the platform. But use this sparingly - not everyone needs to be alerted to everything you write! On the other hand, this is important to grab the attention of friends who haven't switched on all notifications for this channel.

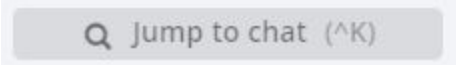
Once you're in a chat channel, you can start chatting away! Talk about the weather, how crazy it is, how mother nature is threatening to shake us off like a bad case of fleas… whatever you want.

[to add: recommendations on high-traffic IM-style channels vs. low-traffic email-list-style channels vs. minimal traffic proposals channels]

a. Chat Menu Options/Shortcuts

There are a few useful shortcuts on the chat menu that can help you navigate:

- A search bar at the top of the list of chats. You can search for the name of a chat channel by typing it here:



- On a computer, the  button in the top right allows you to change your notification settings for the chat, view team members, and see other settings for the chat. On a phone, this menu can be seen in the top right after clicking on a chat channel.
 - Within this menu, you will see a small gear  that allows you to view options for the team or subteam. From here, you can view team members (which will take you to the "team description" page in the "Teams" section), edit your chat channel subscriptions (see section c. below), and leave the team. This menu also allows admins and owners to add new people to the team.
- The  button allows you to start new chats. It's described in detail below

b. Starting New Conversations

The  button will allow you to start a direct conversation with another person or multiple people. You will see this box on a computer:



1. Type in each name you want in this box

2. Click the return sign next to the username you're looking for. Note: if someone you want to add pops up in the suggestions, this button will appear as a plus, but it will do the same thing.

Then the box will look like this:



3. Each person that you add will have their profile picture appear here. Clicking on that circle will remove them from the chat you are creating.

4. Clicking this button will finalize and create the custom chat. Alternatively, you can click outside of the box at any time to quit the operation.

The process is very similar on a phone, but it's a little bit less streamlined. There are some instances where you reach a point where you can't undo what you've done, and you have to restart the process, which can be pretty annoying.

You start the same way - click on the person's name you want to add to the chat. Don't click the little ID card thing - that will take you to their profile. If you want to just chat with one person, you should immediately click start chatting. Or if you already have messages with this person, click into the chat window and start typing. If you start

searching for another person's username, you can't go back to this screen without restarting the process. Very annoying!

To remove someone, from the chat, you still click on their name, but you will need to press the backspace button on your keyboard to take them off the chat.

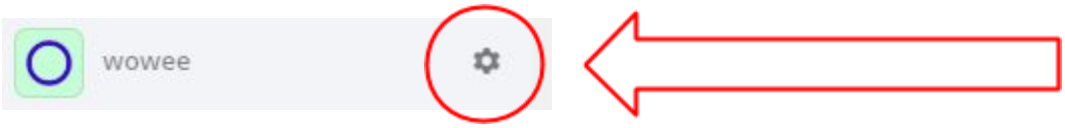
Other than those wrinkles, the process is essentially the same.

You can add as many people as you want to a chat. Another thing to note - you'll almost always want to search for people via their Keybase username. To make sure you're searching keybase usernames, make sure that the little cavewoman head is highlighted, as in the screenshots above.

c. Subscribing to Chat Channels

XRUS is a "Big Team", which means that it has specific chat channels focused around specific topics. You will automatically be added to the main chat channel, which is called #general, when you join the team. But if you want to join other chat channels, you will need to subscribe to those manually.

To join other chat channels, you first need to access the chat menu. From the "List of Chats" pane, click on the small gear next to the team name:



Then, click the "subscribe to channels option. You will see a list of all of the channels for that team. Click on the checkbox (or small switch on mobile: ) next to the channels you want to subscribe to.

The chat menu also allows access to other options for that team, including "view team" which will take you to the team description page, and "leave team".

On a computer, you can also access this menu from the "Teams" section. On the list of teams, on the right side of the window, there will be two icons - a folder and a chat bubble. Click the chat bubble to manage your channel subscriptions:



On a phone, you can also access this menu from the "Teams" section. Once you get to the main team description page, if you look in the top right corner, you'll see the same chat

bubble icon. Bafflingly, clicking this icon on the phone will actually take you to the team's main chat channel! To manage your chat subscriptions, you'll need to click the three dots right next to that option.

If you are a writer, when you click the gear menu, you will see an option that says "Subscribe to Channels" instead of "List of Chats". Clicking this will allow you to update your channel subscriptions, as well as create new channels for the team.

If you are an admin or owner, clicking the gear menu will also give you the option to add new people to the team or chat by username or by email.

d. Using the Chat Window

There are a few small gadgets you can use to enhance your chatting experience:

- The small stopwatch adjacent to the message input box will make Keybase automatically delete your messages after a certain time. This is a good way to further safeguard your identity if you want.
- The little smiley face allows you to use emojis. Hooray!
- On a computer, the small paperclip allows you to attach files to your message.
- On a phone, the @ symbol allows you to mention someone by username (so they'll get a notification about this message, even if it's part of a team chat they don't follow closely).

On a computer, you can also access some other options by hovering your mouse over a message that you or someone else has sent into the chat. Then, you can:

- Apply an emoji reaction. On a computer, click the gray "star face" to see a larger list of emoji options. Find ideal reactions by typing in the search box!
- On a computer, you will also see three small dots on the top right corner of the message. Clicking those will give you several more options:
 - Copy the text
 - "Quote" it, meaning it will appear in your next message
 - Reply privately - enter into a private chat with that person
 - View that person's profile.
 - If it's a message you wrote, you can edit or delete it from here as well
- On a phone, you can access all of these options by pressing and holding on a message.

VII. File Sharing

Keybase provides 250GB (!) worth of shared files.

Congratulations on making it this far! If you still have unresolved questions, you can email xr@extinctionrebellion.us or message @rg4 on keybase. Good luck!